

# Moving forward together

June 2020

## A call for transparency

A retrospective on coronavirus would, at this point, be premature. However, there is something that is abundantly clear despite the dust having yet to settle: from now on, there will be an increased demand for action on the promise of transparency from companies.

This call for transparency into how companies operate will apply to both their internal and external practices and impact. RepRisk is poised to provide the necessary data to facilitate that transparency, and we're grateful to partner with our clients in that work. We took great care to ensure there were no interruptions to our operations during COVID-19 – so that we could continue to be a successful partner and resource to them.

In the spirit of transparency, we wish to share some of the values and practices that we've been employing to navigate this unprecedented crisis, as well as the lessons we learned that will allow us to be better in the future.

## Our culture allowed us to weather the storm

While navigating coronavirus as a team, we found that what suited us best and kept us operating successfully was not the tangible elements of our business – like our cloud-based workplace – but the intangibles: the culture and values we have woven into the fabric of our company over the last 14 years. We found the guidelines needed to move us into the future in the place we least expected: our past.

RepRisk exists in a number of different geographies, and over the years our team has had the unique privilege of learning about the cultures, professional and otherwise, of where we work – how they align and how they differ. There are unique cultural differences that naturally exist between the employer-employee relationship across locations. In order to create a unified team, we needed to ensure that every employee felt equally empowered and trusted.

Nicole Streuli, EVP Operations & Research based in Zurich, Switzerland, has been spearheading initiatives to empower staff: "Our team has worked for more than four years to make the cultural shift in that direction. In November, we organized a global

research leadership gathering in Manila to make sure that all research teams adhere to the same standards worldwide. Empowerment is a by-product of true ownership over the work; an analyst in Toronto is as productive and empowered as an analyst in Manila or Berlin.”

In practice, that means empowering anyone who owns a process to make decisions in collaboration with the broader team and their line managers. It means providing staff with the flexibility to balance work and life as we now know it – and adjust. And it means that equity is paramount in employing these practices.

“All members of the team know exactly what to do, irrespective of working in the office or at home. RepRisk has always had a “virtual company set-up” – moving into home office was therefore not a big transition” adds Dan Santos, General Manager at RepRisk Philippines. “In fact, there were some very positive byproducts of home office for our staff. 70% of our 60+ team members in Manila have a daily commute of 3+ hours per day. Continuing home office options post-pandemic represents a huge boost in quality of life for our team, and also contributes to reducing air pollution.”

CEO Philipp Aeby shared: “I plan to travel less and attend fewer conferences in the future – our local staff in London, New York, or Toronto are well qualified to attend a panel or present at a conference. When people want to hear specifically what I have to say, a webinar is the right format.”

### **Moving forward as a company, partner, and in the industry**

The values and practices we share here are rooted firmly in our past, but they serve as a guiding light as we navigate our way into an ever-changing future for both our company and our field.

RepRisk recently published a Jupyter Notebook, a web-application that allows us to share live code and data, with our latest ESG score based and a sample dataset of companies that allows users to customize their own ESG metrics.

“This is the right thing to do” says RepRisk EVP Sales & Marketing Alexandra Mihailescu Cichon, “because innovation needs transparency and competition, especially when it comes to sustainability, to make sure that we all come out of it in a better place.”

We are committed to continuing to deliver the transparency needed to ensure accountability – and action. There is no “perfect” company or workplace. However, there are steps we can all take to become a good one that does good for its employees and for the world. We are grateful to be working towards that with our clients and partners.